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20 September 1966



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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Communist China: Early signs of a tightening in the food situation have been followed by repeated expressions of concern by the leadership over the autumn crop, which accounts for a major part of the year's production.

[redacted] 25X1
[redacted] more claims of food shortages and rising food prices than during the last several years. For the first time since the disaster years of 1960-61, food shortages have been reported in Peking, Shanghai, Foochow, Swatow, and Canton. In Canton, [redacted] 25X1
[redacted] the adult rice ration has been cut by about one third from the level of the past two or three years and is now 25 pounds a month.

Since 7 September the leadership in Peking has repeatedly ordered the Red Guards to refrain from interfering with agricultural work and to limit their activity in the countryside to helping with the harvest. On 19 September this order was repeated in stronger terms, and for the first time army troops were told to join in bringing in the harvest. These orders have political overtones, but they also probably reflect an awareness that food margins are thin and an anxiety to avoid losses in food production.

Communist China's annual grain production has been estimated at 175-180 million tons for the past four years, while the population growth has been projected at 14 million per year. It is too early to predict the size of the autumn grain harvest, but the year's total is unlikely to be as large as the estimated 175 million tons produced in 1965.

China will import about 5.7 million tons of grain in 1966, only slightly less than last year, and thus far has contracted for about 3.0 million tons for 1967. [redacted] 25X1

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Sweden: The defeat suffered by the Social Democrats in Sunday's local elections has raised the possibility that special national elections will be called.

Prime Minister Erlander has announced that the party's executive and parliamentary groups are to meet next week to decide whether to call such elections. Parliamentary elections normally would not be held until 1968.

In the nationwide polling, the Social Democrats' share of the vote declined from 51 percent to 42.8 percent of the total, as compared to the 1962 elections. The Swedish Communist Party, which has been displaying more independence from Moscow, picked up 2.4 percent of the vote, raising its total to 6.6 percent. The 300,000 absentee ballots still to be counted are not expected to affect the outcome materially.

The Socialists' setback could hasten the retirement of the 65-year-old Erlander, who has been under increased harassment in recent months from his party's noisy left wing. He also has found it difficult to govern effectively in the face of the minority position his party occupies in the lower chamber of parliament. [REDACTED]

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